

## MINUTES OF THE CITY COUNCIL

CITY OF AUSTIN, TEXAS

Special Meeting

February 1, 1971

9:00 A.M.

Council Chamber, City Hall

The Meeting was called to order with Mayor LaRue presiding.

## Roll Call:

Present: Councilmen Gage, Janes, Johnson, MacCorkle, Price, Mayor LaRue  
Absent: Councilman Atkison

Mayor LaRue announced this was a special called meeting for the 1st of February regarding the taxicab ordinance.

At the request of the City Manager, the Traffic Engineer, Mr. Joe Ternus, gave a background of the taxicab ordinance and its present status, from May, 1970, to date. Several meetings were held with the Manager's Office and the various franchise holders; public hearings were conducted before the Council; and on June 4, 1970, the ordinance was adopted. Letters were mailed to the franchise holders listing specific dates where certain requirements were provided, one being that after January, all vehicles over five years old must be removed, and that the franchise holders had until February 1st to comply. Two cab companies had removed 12 vehicles each, replacing 24 vehicles in order to comply. Mr. Ternus explained this five year age is a standard provision in other cities and not a reference to the condition of specific vehicles. Other cities have such a provision in their ordinances, and none make any differential between stock models and custom-built models. He explained no loss would be realized by a company who used the custom-built models, as they operate more efficiently and the maintenance is lower.

MR. ROBINETT, Checker and Yellow Cabs, stated his company purchases only custom-built Checker cabs, built specifically for the taxicab industry to render seven to eight years' service. The cars are safer, more economical to operate, and the result is better service at lower fares.

MR. JAMES W. TOWNSEND, representing George Knox, Harlem Cab Company, stated he was under the impression this was a rate hearing, but it appears to be on a proposed amendment to the ordinance adopted June 4, 1970, regarding the age limit on cabs. His Company removed eight cars off the road and replaced them under this provision. His Company would be placed at a disadvantage as it cannot purchase the Checker custom cars as Mr. Robinett can. MR. ROY VELASQUEZ also had complied with the ordinance and had replaced some of his cabs, noting some of his drivers could not raise the money for new cars. He had

complied and asked that others also comply.

Councilman Johnson stated the public was demanding better equipment, better drivers, and better service, and of course, the Companies must be paid for this in adjusted fares.

Mr. Robinett stated they have 18 or 19 cabs that have passed inspection by the Traffic Department, and because they are over five years old they must be removed today, taking 18 or 19 cabs out of service. The ordinance would cut their fleet in half.

Council members discussed the ordinance and positions of the franchise holders. The Mayor announced it was the concensus of the Council that no changes be made in the ordinance at this time.

#### REQUEST TO BE HEARD BEFORE THE COUNCIL

A letter from Dr. D. A. Dennison asking that he be placed on the Agenda, February 4, had been received. It was pointed out that the City Manager was to be out of the City on that date. The Council suggested that arrangements be made for February 11th or the 18th.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Councilman Janes moved that the Council adjourn. The motion, seconded by Councilman Johnson, carried by the following vote:

Ayes: Councilmen Gage, Janes, Johnson, MacCorkle, Price, Mayor LaRue  
Absent: Councilman Atkison

The Council adjourned.

APPROVED:

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Mayor

ATTESTED:

*Elia Mossley*  
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City Clerk